

## 2003 WEATHER SUMMARY

**January** 2003 was the 14th coldest and 18th driest January in the past 108 years. What was expected to be a very mild January for Kentucky and most of the U.S., due to the return of "El Nino" turned out to be exactly the opposite, extremely cold. The first week had the greatest departure from normal, mild temperatures and wet conditions. The remainder of the month experienced extremely cold temperatures and dry conditions with arctic air dominating the Bluegrass temperatures and frequent snowfall events. Temperatures averaged 28.4 degrees across the State which was 3.4 degrees below normal. Precipitation totaled 2.08 inches statewide which was 1.30 inches below normal.

**February** continued the winter-like weather from the previous month. The month was characterized by a very active storm track that brought at least six storm systems of note through or near the region over the course of the month. This active storm pattern can be linked to the jet stream situation that existed, which included a split-jet system that resided over the region, providing dual storm tracks - one to the north, and one to the south of the State. This jet stream setup, with its close proximity to the State, and frequent southerly meandering, also helped to pull well below normal temperatures from the north into the region, resulting in a monthly temperature average that fell below normal. There were also an unusually high frequency of snowfall events mostly providing trace amounts to less than 1 to 3 inches. Flooding and flash flooding occurred in many central, southern and southeastern sections of the State. Temperatures averaged 33.7 degrees across the State which was 3.7 degrees below normal. Precipitation totaled 7.33 inches statewide which was 3.58 inches above normal.

**March** was the 11th driest and 26th warmest March in the past 108 years. Temperatures averaged 48.7 degrees across the State which was 2.2 degrees above normal and 3.2 degrees warmer than March 2002. Precipitation totaled 2.24 inches statewide which was 2.32 inches below normal which was less than half of the normal rainfall for the month. No significant snowfall events occurred during the month.

**April** was the 11th wettest and 27th warmest April in past Century. Temperatures averaged 57.8 degrees across the State which was 2.2 degrees above normal and 10 degrees warmer than the previous month. Rainfall totaled 6.06 inches statewide which was 1.96 inches above normal and considerably wetter than the previous month.

Late Spring field operations and many other outdoor activities were put on hold due to very wet conditions during **May** which was a continuation from April's wet conditions. May will go into the record books as the 8th wettest, 53rd coolest May for the Commonwealth. Thirteen tornadoes hit Kentucky during the month causing fatalities, numerous injuries and considerable property and crop damage. The unusually high frequency of rainfall events provided numerous and extended periods of very high humidity, leaf wetness and disease potential for crops. Temperatures averaged 64.5 degrees across the State which was near normal. Rainfall totaled 7.35 inches statewide which was 2.36 inches above normal.

Cool, wet conditions were the rule for **June** and a continuation of the very wet conditions of April and May. June will go into the record books ranking in the top 10 wettest and coolest June's on record. The first 3 weeks of the month received above normal rainfall across the State which continued the very wet conditions of April and May. Temperatures averaged 69 degrees across the State which was 3.4 degrees below normal and 5 degrees warmer than the previous month. Rainfall totaled 6.40 inches statewide which was 2.14 inches above normal.

**July** had below normal temperatures and above normal rainfall. Temperatures averaged 75.6 degrees across the State which was 0.8 degrees below normal and was nearly 7 degrees warmer than the previous month. Yet, July temperatures for the State ranked as the 37th coolest on record. Rainfall totaled 5.38 inches statewide which was 0.98 inches above normal.

After a very cool summer, **August** temperatures finally reversed the cool pattern with a lengthy period of warmer than normal temperatures. Rainfall, on the other hand, continued the wet weather pattern that started, for the most part, in April. August rainfall ranked as the 11th wettest on record (109 years). Temperatures averaged 76.3 degrees across the State which was 1.3 degree above normal. Rainfall totaled 5.23 inches statewide which was 1.63 inch above normal.

Temperatures for **September** averaged 66.6 degrees across the State which was 1.6 degrees below normal, nearly 10 degrees cooler than the previous month ranking September as the 22nd coolest on record. Rainfall totaled 6.22 inches statewide which was 2.62 inches above normal ranking September as the 4th wettest on record.